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# Press Release

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## COAST GUARD INVESTIGATES CRUISESHIP CAPTAIN FOR OPERATING VESSEL WHILE INTOXICATED

**Seattle** - The Coast Guard is investigating the captain of the cruise ship Mercury for operating a commercial vessel under the influence of alcohol in violation of Title 46, United States Code, Section 2302. The statute, a Class A misdemeanor which is punishable with up to one year imprisonment, prohibits the operation of a vessel while under the influence of alcohol.

Celebrity Cruises, owners of the Mercury, removed the captain and the ship sailed safely with a qualified relief captain. The cruise line fully cooperated with the investigation.

At approximately 2:27 p.m., a Coast Guard Sector Seattle boarding officer, while performing a safety inspection onboard the Mercury, made contact with the vessel's captain and detected an odor of alcohol on his breath.

The federal statutory law provides that a person operating a commercial vessel on the waters of the United States is considered legally intoxicated if his blood alcohol concentration level exceeds .040.

The Mercury, owned by Celebrity Cruises, was moored at terminal 66 at the time of the incident.

The investigation emphasizes the Coast Guard's commitment to the American people to preserve the safety of the navigable waters of the United States. The resulting response by personnel from Coast Guard Sector Seattle, Coast Guard Investigative Service and the United States Attorney's office underscores the long standing inter-agency cooperation.

This incident should send a clear message to all mariners operating in U.S. waters that operating any vessel under the influence of drugs or alcohol is a serious threat to the safety of other mariners, the general public, and maritime commerce and transportation. Such behavior will not be tolerated and violations will be enforced to the fullest extent.

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